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# HOOFSTUK 6

## DIE SLOT VAN DIE NAVORSINGSVERHAAL.

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### 6 1. INLEIDING.

And then there is the ending: what is our sense of who these people are now, what are they left with, what happened, and what did it mean?

(Lamott 1995:62)

Om 'n navorser te wees, is om soos 'n skrywer, vír en saam met ander mense te droom. Lamott (1995:231) skryf:

You are lucky to be one of those people who wishes to build sand castles with words, who is willing to create a place where your imagination can wander. We build this place with sand of memories; these castles are our memories and inventiveness made tangible. So part of us believes that when the tide starts coming in, we won't really have lost anything, because actually only a symbol of it was there in the sand. Another part of us thinks we'll figure out a way to divert the ocean. This is what separates artists from ordinary people: the belief, deep in our hearts, that if we build our castles well enough, somehow the ocean won't wash them away. I think this is a wonderful kind of person to be.

Die navorsingsproses kan vergelyk word met die skryf van 'n verhaal, die skepping van 'n boek. Dit sluit baie van die betrokkenes se verhale in: kliënte; families; navorsers; pasiënte; gemeentelede. Maar die navorsingsproses is nooit net refleksie op hierdie verhale nie, "...it is always a new writing". Navorsing skep sy eie verhaal met nuwe moontlikhede. Daarom eindig narratiewe navorsing nie met 'n samevatting nie, maar met 'n oop einde, wat hopelik 'n nuwe verhaal en nuwe navorsing sal stimuleer.

## **6.2. NAVORSING *MET* MENSE.**

Die woord "met" in "Navorsing *met* mense", beklemtoon die strewe om mense in die navorsing in te sluit. Aan die een kant beteken dit dat die navorser duidelik en openhartig moet omgaan met sy/ haar eie posisie in die navorsingsproses. Mc Clintock en ander (2003:715) stel dat, "We need to include ourselves, as people, in any research. When engaged in research practice we are *immersed* in the research, we cannot step outside of our own understandings, actions and interests". Verder, meen hulle, bied navorsing 'n wyse aan waarop die navorser op sy eie *verstaan* kan reflekteer, maar ook sy eie *verstaan* kan verander. Navorsing *met* mense laat toe dat hierdie self-ontwikkelingsrol erken word. Daarom dat navorsing *met* mense substansieel anders is as navorsing *op* mense, en navorsing *oor* mense, en navorsing *vir* mense. Mc Clintock en ander (2003:716) merk op, "Researching *with* people does not aim to describe people, or what they do, rather it aims to work with people on issues of concern".

Heron (1996:21) bied twee motiverings aan waarom mense as vennote ("partners") in die navorsing gesien moet word: politieke en epistemologies. Op politieke gronde, stel hy dat mense die reg het "...to participate in decisions that concern and effect them. The democratization of research management is as much a human rights issue as the democratization of government...". Rahman (1988:128) stel dit soos volg, *Participatory Action Research* poog om aan die deelnemers te herstel "...the

legitimacy of the knowledge they are capable of producing through their own collectives and verification systems..., and their right to use this knowledge – not excluding any other knowledge but not dictated by it – as a guide in their own action”. Op epistemologiese gronde, maak Heron (1996:21) die stelling dat mense deelneem aan hul eie ‘weet’ (“knowing”), en dat praktiese kennis, dit is ‘weet hoe’, “...the fulfillment of the knowledge quest” is. Om te weet – *kennis* – vind plaas wanneer deelgeneem word aan die navorsingsiklusse van refleksie en aksie, wat beliggaam word in wat hy “Co-operative Inquiry” noem.

Hierop bespreek Mc Clintock en ander (2003:718) vier metafore vir navorsing waardeur sinvol gereflekteer kan word op die rolle van navorsing. Ek maak enkele opmerkings oor elkeen.

#### **6.2.1. Navorsing-as-Aksie: *Om die skeidslyn tussen navorsing doen en navorsing gebruik te versmelt.***

Siklusse van aksie en refleksie is ‘n sentrale deel van *Participatory Action Research*. Hierdie progressiewe ritme van aksie en refleksie is ook bekend as “a process of people’s praxis” (Rahman 1988:116). Dit beteken dat die metodes refleksief en siklies is – van data tot gebruik, en van aksie tot teorie. Dit maak van PAR ‘n “systematically evolving, living process”, volgens McTaggart (1991:181). McTaggart (1991:175) verduidelik hierdie aksie-en-refleksie proses in meer detail:

Participatory Action Research starts small and develops through the selfreflective spiral: a spiral of cycles of planning, acting, observing, reflecting and then re-planning, further implementation, observing and reflecting... the collective reflects on observations made about action taken so far and uses this collective activity to inform decisions about future action steps of the group and of individuals.

Aksie-navorsing (“Action Research”, hierna AR) het nog altyd gefokus op *aksie* en die implementering van verandering. Wadsworth (1991:63) bied die volgende verduideliking aan van hoedat aksie-navorsing die skeidslyn tussen die *doen* en die *gebruik* van navorsing versmelt:

AR is not research followed by hoped for action. It is action, it is action which is intentionally researched and modified, leading to the next stage of action which is then again intentionally researched... AR is an active set of consecutive cycles of action, reflection, consideration of better ways of proceeding followed by putting them into action....

AR is ook eksplisiet gefokus op die verhouding tussen navorser en die mense betrokke. Mc Clintock en ander (2003:719) stel dit soos volg, “All those involved become researchers, as they reflect on their actions and enter into AR cycles of planning-acting-observing-reflecting, and hence all people act”. In Heron (1981:10) se woorde, die navorser-subjek onderskeiding word verbreek, en “...the subject is a fully fledged co-researcher, and the researcher is a co-subject, participating fully in the action and experience to be researched”. Dus, hieruit vloei dit dat navorsing-as-aksie almal betrokke by die navorsing, insluit. Mede-navorsers (“co-researchers”) word ‘n etiket vir almal wat aan die navorsing deelneem.

Fish (1989) beskryf ander betrokkenes soos akademiese navorsers as “...members of an interpretative community”. Mc Clintock en ander (2003:720) stel dit dat ‘n navorser nie net bydra tot nie, maar ook ‘n interpretatiewe gemeenskap konstitueer. Dit is baie kragtig insoverre die interpretatiewe gemeenskap erkenning bied aan verhoudinge met/ tussen mede-navorsers.

### **6.2.2. Navorsing-as-Narratief: *Om nuwe metafore te ontdek en voor te stel.***

Mc Clintock en ander (2003:720) stel dit dat navorsing beskou word as *om uit te vind* (“finding out”), en kan daarom gesien word as ‘n daaglikse aktiwiteit. Webber (2000:12) bied die volgende voorbeeld aan van navorsing-as-uitvind, “...investigating something which makes a difference to me and which can be incorporated into community knowledge for our benefit”. Deur die gebruik van so ‘n beskrywing word gepoog om die navorsing sinvol te maak vir die deelnemers, deurdat aangedui word dat hierdie navorsing gefokus is op sake en temas wat belangrik is, en daarom relevant. Uitvind impliseer om nuut of anders te verstaan. Mc Clintock en ander (2003:720) meen dus dat, “...finding out is linked to *creation* of new understandings”, en “If new understandings result from different metaphors, then finding out implies *changing* metaphors”. Verder stel hulle dat ‘n narratief die proses van uitvind koherent maak. Narratiewe, of verhale, word beskou as een van die wyses waarop mense sin maak van hul ervarings deurdat hulle hierdie ervarings volgens temas organiseer.

### **6.2.3. Navorsing-as-Fasilitering: *Om ruimte te skep vir navorsing.***

Indien almal wat betrokke is by navorsing *akteurs* (“actors”, of dan aksienemers) is, dan is almal ingedompel in *uitvind* en *storie-vertel*. In navorsing *met* mense is die rolle wat toegeken word aan deelnemers afhanklik van hoe mede-navorsers uitvind en stories vertel. Terwyl navorsing dan *alledaags* is, mag dit wees dat mense te besig is met hul daaglikse take, of net nie die geleentheid het om op hul aksies te reflekteer nie. Dit suggereer ‘n rol vir die akademiese navorsers: “...to create opportunities for everyday research”, aldus Mc Clintock en ander (2003:721-722).

Hierdie kreatiewe rol kan fasilitering genoem word. Verder stel hulle voor dat indien hierdie aktiewe rol van fasilitering gekombineer word met deelname aan die navorsing, dan word 'n deelnemer-fasiliteerder tipe rol geïmpliseer, en “[W]ith this role, a researcher cannot just assume a role of facilitation, nor can a researcher just be a participant as there is some responsibility for ‘creating space’ ”. Om ruimte te skep is 'n baie nuttige wyse waarop navorsers op hul rolle, en die navorsing in die algemeen, kan reflekteer.

#### **6.2.4. Navorsing-as-Verantwoording: “*Who claims that research is a good thing?*”.**

'n Etiese benadering van verantwoording word gebaseer op self-refleksie, en 'n bewustheid van moontlike posisies vir 'n navorser om in te neem. Verantwoording noodsaak dat aksie, storie-vertel en fasilitering beskou word as drie metafore uit baie. Russell & Ison (2000) stel dat objektiwiteit vervang moet word deur verantwoording as navorsingsetiek. Mc Clintock en ander (2003:724) stel die volgende eenvoudige beskrywing van verantwoording voor: “...to be a self-reflective researcher”. Die bespreking van navorsing as aksie, storie-vertel en fasilitering getuig van die pogings om self-reflekteerend te wees.

Aksie, storie-vertel, fasilitering en verantwoording is dan metafore wat koherensie bied aan pogings om navorsing *met* mense te doen, aldus Mc Clintock en ander (2003:726). Ander metafore kan oorweeg word. Twee hoofrolle is deur hulle in hul bespreking voorgestel: navorser-verteller en navorser-fasiliteerder. Die navorser-fasiliteerder rol behels die inisiëring en die skep van ruimte vir navorsing, en die neem van verantwoordelikheid vir die navorsingsaksies. Op enige tydskop kan die navorser in enige van hierdie twee rolle wees, en aan ander mense wat betrokke is by die navorsing kan die rol van mede-navorser toegeken word, indien aanvaar

word dat hulle die uitnodiging daartoe aanvaar het, "...which reflects a desire to move away from seeing people as research users or research subjects".

Die melding van 'n uitnodiging verwys na Mc Clintock en ander (2003:724) se interessante opmerking dat, "[I]t is megalomania to proclaim that researcher interventions *will* have an effect on other people: indeed a personal motivation for our research agenda is a criticism that a lot of research has been irrelevant". Alhoewel dit nie sê dat die navorser nie intervensies maak nie, om ruimte te skep, is steeds om intervensies te maak, al is dit nie 'n direkte poging om ander se verstaan te verander nie. Russell & Ison (2000) bied die konsep van 'n uitnodiging ("invitation") aan as 'n idee om intervensie te benader. Die aanname hieragter is dat indien mense uitgenooi word om aan die navorsing deel te neem en hulle die reg het om die uitnodiging van die hand te wys, dan is dit so dat verantwoordelikheid vir daardie aksie of proses gedeel word.

In die lig van bogenoemde bespreking sal dit vir die leser duidelik word met die transkripsies wat in hierdie hoofstuk aangebied word, dat ek as navorser myself nie as apart van die navorsingsproses, en dan ook die refleksie daarop, sien nie, maar ten volle deel van die aksies en die proses daarvan. Verder gee ek erkenning aan die lede van die akademiese gemeenskap – soos bespreek onder paragraaf 6.3 - vir hul rol as interpretatiewe gemeenskap in die refleksie op die navorsingsaksies en proses. Verder is dit op te merk in hoe 'n mate ook erkenning gegee is aan die lede van die Talitha Kumi-groep as mede-navorsers deurdat moeite gedoen is om die gesprek met hulle verder te neem en uit te brei. Dit is ook op te merk daarin dat in elke aksie van die navorsing gepoog is om die navorsing sinvol te maak vir die mede-navorsers deurdat sake en temas wat belangrik is vir hulle, telkens op die agenda geplaas is. My eie deelname aan en opsoek van 'n reflekerende, interpretatiewe gemeenskap toon aan dat ek poog om 'n self-reflekerende navorser te wees.

### 6.3. Jill Freedman en Gene Combs: *Evanston Family Therapy Center*.

In Augustus 2005 is een van my *drome* bewaarheid toe my eie *reis* met Narratiewe Terapie en navorsing my na die Evanston Family Therapy Center, net buite die asemrowende stad, Chicago geneem het. Soos ek reeds genoem het, het een van my ander *drome* in 2000 gerealiseer toe ek die jaarlikse Internasionale Narratiewe Terapie Konferensie in Adelaide, Suid-Australië bygewoon het. Buiten die voorreg om narratiewe *reuse* soos Michael White, Alice Morgan en Maggy Carey daar persoonlik te beleef, was dit ook my voorreg om 'n week-lange werkswinkel van Gene Combs en Jill Freedman by te woon. Sedert hierdie *ontmoeting* het ek *gedroom* om ook 'n draai in Evanston te maak. Om die navorsings- en praktykwerk waarmee ek besig is met hulle – veral Jill Freedman – te kon deel, en om haar daarna deel te hê van die refleksie op hierdie werk, was vir my meer as 'n voorreg.

Om te sê dit was soos om “aan die voete van Gamaliël” (vergelyk Handeling 22:3) te sit met die tyd wat ek by Dulwich Center in Michael White se teenwoordigheid kon spandeer, is sekerlik 'n gepaste analogie. Om dan nou – vir 'n tweede keer – Jill te beleef, is dit sekerlik gepas om te sê dat dit was asof ek aan Debora se voete gesit het (vergelyk Rigters 4 en 5). Die leser van hierdie proefskrif sal sekerlik nie haar *wysheid* kan mis wanneer hy/ sy die transkripsies van hierdie refleksie-gesprekke, wat in hierdie hoofstuk weergegee word, deurlees nie. Verder was dit 'n groot voorreg om uiteenlopende persoonlikhede met ryke ervaringe en vaardighede, te hê as lede van die refleksiespan. Elkeen het 'n uiters waardevolle bydrae gelewer, hulle was: Shelley Blakely (Indianapolis, IN, Verenigde State van Amerika), Francine Titley (Ottawa, ON, Kanada), Kendra M. Lutes (Boise, ID, Verenigde State van Amerika), Stephanie Paravicini (Napa, CA, Verenigde State van Amerika), Flora Tsang Po Ling (Lok Fu, Kowloon, Hong Kong), Marilee van Wyk (Pretoria, Suid Afrika), en Mary Mirro (Crown Point, IN, Verenigde State van Amerika).

Die hieropvolgende transkripsies word in Engels weergegee, aangesien die volle gesprek in Engels gevoer is. Ek vertrou dat alle lesers hiermee gemaklik sal wees. In paragrawe 6.4 – 6.16 word die transkripsie van die refleksie-gesprek na aanleiding van my aanbieding van die navorsings- en praktykwerk waarmee ek besig is, weergegee. Nadat die groep op my aanbieding gereflekteer het, het Jill Freedman die behoefte uitgespreek dat die groep opmerkings en boodskappe aan die Talitha Kumi-groep wil stuur. Van hierdie gesprek is 'n video-opname gemaak wat ek met my terugkeer in Suid Afrika aan die groep moes speel. Hierdie gesprek word weergegee in paragrawe 6.17 – 6.20.

#### **6.4. REFLEKSIES OP *OM GERAAK TE WEES* EN *OM TEENWOORDIG TE WEES*.**

Jill: I'm interested in what moved people in Chris' work and his presentation?

Shelley: What moved me was how moved he was by sharing his stories, his presence and just seeing how much care and love he has for these girls.

Jill: Why do you think did that stood out for you?

Shelley: I'm not sure, it was just a powerful thing to witness. I hear stories from therapists, a lot... hard stories to hear and I don't always have this... same kind of feelings that I noticed in him.

Jill: So how does that affect you then to witness that strong feelings?

Shelley: It makes me feel... sort of feel in awe of his work and the commitment he has to it, just all the thought and energy that must have gone into creating the celebrations and thinking of ways to be with them, and honour them, and what he put into bringing the stories to us today.

Jill: Does it take you somewhere in terms of your own work or your own questions... where does it take you?

Shelley: It takes me to wanting to do more, to want to put into action some of the things, like the celebrations and honouring and the certificates and things that he has done.

Jill: I noticed that when Shelley first talked she said that what moved her was how moved Chris was, there was like this sound - so I'm curious about it that this was also what other people will be responding to.

Stephanie: Well, just even in Chris' intimation and his presence and his enthusiasm and the changes, when he was speaking about the development in one of the girls' life, it was just, everything was so animated and his enthusiasm came out in the presentation, and I can imagine the presence he has when he is doing the work.

Jill: Does that connect with your life or your work in some ways?

Stephanie: I was thinking about that, I think for me what stood out was and it's attached to this enthusiasm, it's the willingness to kind of be there, just to jump in in some way. And the way it connects with me is by opposition as I find myself often stuck because I feel like I spend a lot of time thinking about what I could or should be doing and maybe I don't do it or it kind of immobilizes me in my work. We were just talking about it – me and Kendra - a couple of days ago about how there's some people that is just kind of doing it, not that there's no thought behind it, I'm not saying that there's no thoughtfulness, just this willingness. He spoke with this woman who told her about this girl, he met with that girl that day or it sounded not long afterwards, and being in the moment and thinking with the people that he meets and that's how I imagine him doing the work. It stood out because it's something I would want to be able to do more off and then I get stuck in the thinking and researching in how was that done

Jill: That's interesting to me... the way you've drawn those distinctions because I would speak that way about language, that there are people when they learn a language they would just step into and speak it without them thinking about it. And I would be more somebody who like... and so it makes me think about two things, one is, you're ability to speak many languages, and I wonder if you know something about this to be similar to what Chris knows in this context, and the other about just like how Chris and what goes into just joining in that way.

Stephanie: It was interesting because he said he was uncomfortable because of the English and yet his presentation was very clear.

**6.5. REFLEKSIES OP *OM VERBAAS TE WEES EN OM NIE HAASTIG TE WEES NIE.***

Jill: What were other people most moved by?

Mary: I was very moved by his first story about Madilise and how he seemed surprised that she talked about disappointment as being her concern at that moment instead of talking about maybe anger or the abuse itself, and I was just moved by his being surprised by that.

Jill: And what about his being surprised did you find moving?

Mary: I probably would feel surprised as well, if I was interviewing somebody talking about abuse, I might suspect that they would talk about anger and being such a strong emotion, that that would be the primary thing that might come out first.

Jill: Where did that take you witnessing that and pondering how you would have...

Mary: I think it just makes me think that there's so many emotions involved with sexual abuse and there's so many layers to it that there's no way you can talk about it in one setting, and its going to take several times to talk about it to get to all the emotions and all the effects that the abuse has on the individual.

Jill: So, Mary, do you think that it all make a difference in your work?

Mary: I think that I will not rush it, just let the client take the lead and talk where they are most comfortable at that particular moment.

#### **6.6. REFLEKSIES OP GESLAG EN OM NIE 'N BEDREIGING TE WEES NIE.**

Marilee: Listening to Chris made me wonder... yes, it intrigued me how he was able not to be a threat.

Jill: Were there particular things he talked about or said that made that clear to you that he wasn't a threat?

Marilee: I was thinking what about Chris... because as he was talking I became less and less aware of his gender... he becoming less of a threat, and I was trying to think what it was .... I thought it might be that his presence outside of being a male, he was just present in the emotions. Which for me was unique, and I wanted to know more about that. How the girls would see him, how they perceive his identity, what he is to them?

Jill: Did you get some hints or images of how they may perceive him?

Marilee: Many things, but nothing made me think that they saw him as a threat but they were exited, inspired, safe. It sounded that they found safety with him but nothing made me think that they saw anything wrong or a threat in him as being a man. Not that all men are abusers, but in these cases he explicitly said that they were male abusers, so it made me think, 'How are you different?'. I was curious to hear more about that and it was very obvious to me that they saw safety and a presence in Chris.

Flora: I share this. I was fascinated by how Chris as a male counsellor was relating to those girls... acceptance, trust and safety. It was amazing.

Jill: Did that give you any thoughts about like what Chris values or stands for - any wonderings about that?

Flora: I think he really cares for them... for their experiences, for their growth. He's really sensitive.

Jill: How does this connect or reverberate or resonate somewhere with your own experience?

Flora: It reminds me for all those years I become more and more distant because I still remember many church members they often asked how could you deal with all those member's needs and trauma. How do you deal with all your feelings? I think I have a way of distancing myself from it. Sometimes it helps me, sometimes the distance helps in a way that I don't become emotionally too involved, but as time goes by I think that it becomes a habit to maintain a distance.

Jill: So did Chris' presentation move you in a different direction? And if..., can you say something about it?

Flora: Yes, I think he moves me in a way that I can be more in touch with those feelings.

Jill: Do you like that idea?

Flora: Actually, I really want to celebrate many times.

#### **6.7. REFLEKSIES OP SPONTANËITEIT EN OM SOOS 'N KIND TE WEES.**

Francine: I was struck by his ability to be sort of childlike in his desire to celebrate even before the end and you know that spontaneity and that energy that we saw and the way he... just the body language that suggests that the way he listens to them as if he is really in admiration and...

Jill: What body language were you noticing?

Francine: The curiosity, the expression of curiosity, you know, about the broom stick. And asking those questions 'How did you do that?', you know, that sense of surprise, the amazement and all, what he hears and tells them, it's so inspiring. And he really made me think that he really places himself at each group, wanting to celebrate and enjoy, and I can sense that he must laugh a lot with them and he is really breaking the hierarchy. That really touched me.

Jill: Why do you think that touched you?

Francine: It is the best one thing I do try to do as well. And it reminded me of my husband too... with our kids, I tended to be much more serious but he will always make them laugh and engage with them as he was a child as well. It made such a difference for the kids. They just loved it. I really try to be that way as well, but to be humble, to be sort of sincerely touched by the way they behave, even their courage, but not in the cheerleading type of way. There's a huge difference between that cheerleading and that real sense of amazement at their energy, at their courage, at their determination and...

### **6.8. REFLEKSIES OP SORG SONDER BESORGDHEID.**

Marilee: Well, this has raised new questions and connections for me in that I thought about my attitude towards caring within this environment or within the relationship with a client. I heard from other people who deal with trauma with their clients that it's best to care without caring, that is how you stay in the business longest. But now... Chris is not like that, he is affective, obviously.

Jill: Does that raise any new questions for you that it might be possible?

Marilee: It does, I want to see the statistics on that.

### **6.9. REFLEKSIES OP DIE GROEP SE REFLEKSIES.**

Jill: So, Chris what was it like for you to hear...?

Chris: It was a strange experience for me because in a way I live and work on an island. So, in part I was scared to share my work with people because you don't know whether you are in anyway in the right direction with your work. No one reflects on my work, that's why it's nice to have those discussions with Nina that Masters student, just to like reflect in some way.

Jill: So what moved you in hearing...?

Chris: It moved me in hearing how they were moved about how I was moved. Because at this stage I'm in a kind of a struggle with my administrator - he wants statistics on how many kids you see, he puts it directly that he is not interested in the content of the work. You made me realise how much it touches me, and that this is the kind of work that I'm with, and how do I reflect that in statistics?, How do I reflect the effect this work has in these children's lives? I just can't and it's frustrating, it demotivates me because he has no idea of the effect this work has on children's lives, and I just feel that I'm not up to his standards. I often wish I could get him to sit down for 5 minutes and chat with Chereese and just hear her story.

Jill: Did you have the sense that the group could see the kind of effects this was having in these children's lives?

Chris: Yes, I think so, definitely. My presentation was short and I tried to not specifically convey that but I think they definitely picked it up.

Jill: I guess I'm getting that image of sort of being a counterbalance to what you've been asked for statistically.

Chris: Yes, definitely.

Jill: So, where does that take you to have that kind of a counterbalance to the request you have in your own context?

Chris: It is in a way affirming not just of the work but also the way that I'm approaching this work. I don't think I made specific decisions on how I want to do it like, specifically in an emotional way. I'm just me doing it this way, so it's in a way affirming that they could recognise the effect of it in these children's lives.

Jill: Do you think that the children know how moved you are by their initiatives?

Chris: I can't think of an incident that I cried while working with them, I usually do afterwards.

Jill: But do you think they know?

Chris: Yes, I would make known when the intensity of the abuse touches me, I would make expressions like, 'Wow, it must have been quite bad for you'.

Jill: Do you think it makes a difference to them to know that you feel this?

Chris: Yes, I often thought of how I could do it in a way that would keep me de-centred. And that I could keep their telling of it, their feelings about it in the centre, because I don't know what it was like, I don't know what they have experienced. Sometimes it's just overwhelming, I allow myself to say, 'Yoooh, that must have been terrible'.

Jill: I'm wondering if how moved people where by you're being moved might make a difference in where you decide you're willing to let them know the way you would, you know your thinking about if it's okay to even... though you don't have direct experience.

Chris: I think I'll allow myself to be more spontaneous about that, but I'll keep on being aware of not putting my emotions too much into it or let it take over. I'll definitely be aware of that.

#### **6.10. REFLEKSIES OP *OM DOMINEE TE WEES EN OM DEEL TE WEES VAN DIE "SISTERHOOD"*.**

Jill: Where there other things...?

Chris: Yes, I appreciate their remarks a lot, the one about the gender, I definitely do sometimes enquire about how at ease they are with me. The other group I have is at the Crisis Centre for Pregnant Teenage Girls, so one day, I can't remember what the discussion was about, but it was about something like a brotherhood. I can't remember what it was, so, one of the girls said but we've got a sisterhood. So I said, 'Wow, what does that mean?', and then she turned around to me and said 'But you can be part of our sisterhood'. I was so amazed that she was so relaxed about the idea. The other strange thing, and I think Marilee might have a sensitivity for this, is that they keep on calling me 'dominee'. A 'dominee' is a minister, a reverend.

Jill: I wondered about that?

Chris: Even having this relationship with me they keep the title.

Jill: What is the meaning of that for you?

Chris: I don't think they know what it means. What I mean by that is, she will know what a 'dominee' is in our culture or use to be, it's someone 'up there' and it's someone who is reserved in most cases or used to be, especially being a male and... It's only in the past decade that we have like woman in that kind of position, so it's always this unbelievable awareness of the relaxed way they come into my office and besides the title, they keep on calling me 'dominee', and how relax the interactions are.

Jill: So do you think you have changed the meaning of 'dominee'?

Chris: Definitely, I think 'dominee'... this is not church people, not church children, so maybe they are free to attached their own meanings of what 'dominee' Chris is. I think that they got much more like 'dominee' means someone who cares for you. So that was interesting about gender and breaking the hierarchy.

## 6.11. REFLEKSIES OP IDENTITEIT EN DIE “PERVASIVENESS” VAN MISBRUIK.

Jill: One of the things that I have witnessed from my work with sexual abuse is that people draw identity conclusions based on, you know, discourses about woman being ruined, or once people have that kind of experiences they are disassociated and dehumanized. So, there's some ideas and experiences that people have of drawing identity conclusions and like they are bad because it was their fault, and so it seems that like woven into your work. You talked about, and I don't know what this word means, you said 'She was so *chuffed* with who she became', and you talked about the differences in the way somebody thought about their personality over 3 weeks, and it's just the contrast between this idea of becoming someone else and, not because the other person was bad, but the change of identity and fluidity of identity it just seemed so... and in such a casual way that you described it, it seemed like a very powerful antidote to these fixed ideas about somebody being ruined by an experience of sexual abuse. I found that really moving because I've worked with people who have been confined by these kind of experiences that there's something bad about them.

Chris: It is actually a very strange or conflicting experience in my own life, I have read Allen Bass' and Laura Davis' book where they write about the pervasiveness of abuse, that the abuse just take over the whole live of the survivor, and I think I take a

definite stand against this, and that came from working with the adult woman survivors in Pongola where I used to live, because the one lady was the manager of the branch of the bank, the other lady where the manager of the local lodge and hotel, so their beings just told me that the abuse does not prevade their whole lifes, they are successful in specific areas of their lifes. Although the one would story how she battles with parenthood, the other one battles with sexual intimacy, but I've learned from those woman that the abuse and the effects of it are not pervasive.

Jill: Can I just say that I'm glad that you were open to recognising those battles and how much of those woman's lives were outside of that and that I feel... I like to join you in being able to recognise how much the fluidity of people becoming other than who they've been, and being able to recognise that I think it's really easy given our professional training to not notice that and it's so important and I feel I'd like to join you on that. Is there anything else you like to say.

Chris: No I'm fine

## **6.12. REFLEKSIES OP "INSIDER WITNESS TEAMS" EN OM 'N KONSULTANT TE WEES.**

Jill: Do you have some idea of how you would like to hear people's ideas?

Chris: Maybe, I thought I would like to hear your thoughts about what I call 'the insider witness team', maybe we can spend a few seconds on that. Is that something to go with?, and then explore ways of working or being with an insider witness group.

Jill: Do you want to hear that... are you asking me specifically or for everybody's ideas?

Chris: Yes, everybody might share their thoughts on that.

Stephanie: I think members of a outsider witness team aren't just professional people. I think there's a lot of articles about using people who struggle with the same problem as outsider witnesses or groups. So, it's not just defined as having professional people that witness the conversation. I think it's just called outsider witness, that's what they called it, it doesn't mean that it's an outsider person. You can even use it within a family when you interview one member of the family and the rest of the family can be an outsider witness, I think you can use all sorts of permutations. I think it's a great idea to use it with people who struggle with the same problem.

Jill: I have heard of a group speak - it was the Anti Anorexia/ Anti Bulimia League of Vancouver - and I went to a presentation that they did in which they decided they weren't going to call themselves 'outsider witnesses', they were going to call themselves 'insider witnesses' and one of the things that they

did was... you know how when we do an outsider witness group, we talk to each other and then you're in this position, they said as 'insiders' they were going to speak directly to the person. So, they thought by calling themselves 'insiders' they could be in a place of more expertise than some of the tentative ways that we would structure an outsider witness group. That was interesting to me.

Stephanie: Why, was it just when you said it, because I have never even thought of that distinction until Chris mentioned it.

Kendra: Even if you're just using like one person, it doesn't have to be a group, like one of these women and on a conversation with somebody who may be just beginning to talk with and having them being your witness.

Jill: That could be part of the celebration, it seems like that you picked these points where people have moved on in some way and part of that could be wondering if they want to become a consultant, an outsider witness, for somebody else.

Chris: I actually thought of asking Chereese that, and Madilise, because they have progressed, they would so much better know where these girls are at and what they are thinking and feeling outside even the sessions. So, I thought, I like the word 'consultant', I mean it's again empowering them of the strides they've made.

Stephanie: It's funny to see people's reaction, like I just had an adolescent who struggled with anger and she was about to have all these legal problems. And she's doing really well, and I asked her if she would be my consultant and she was blown away. She was going, 'Whatever, sure', but it's kind of funny to see because it is so unusual for them, they are so not used to being asked to become experts in that, and I think it's really powerful.

Francine: One thing that Michael White said at his last sessions that he gave in Toronto last May, he said that when he does use outsider/ insider people he did say that he would never just let them talk, he would structure the conversation. Because in our society, and I don't know if it's the same as your society, we are so recruited into judging and blaming, and especially giving advise to people, because maybe they have gone through this experience, maybe they might feel that they have advise that they would want to give a person... where it can create a sort of a hierarchy. So, that he felt he wanted to protect people. The other thing is, if they've been extremely active in resisting and their resistance to this, their behavior has been very courageous, those people who might not have... who might have really wanted to do it but not have been able to take that broom, I can see that that..., I don't know, could it be dangerous, like 'I wasn't courageous', 'I didn't do that', 'I should of done that'?

Jill: You mean if they would to tell their story that would lead to comparisons?

Francine: Yes, because we're so recruited to comparing in our society, like, 'O my, my resistance wasn't as good as yours'.

Chris: I thought it might be useful to be aware about when you introduce such a group. I only introduce such a group when we're busy working on the alternative story or when the alternative story has been richly told already, so I won't bring it in while we are still struggling with the problem story. But when this alternative story is there and strong and they could just affirm that, that is when I will bring the people in. They would reflect on the strengths and skills that has come to the fore from that person.

Francine: I think that is a great idea, it's just, I think just to be mindful that...

Chris: Yes, that's useful.

Jill: You can structure outsider witness groups from the get-go like you're interviewing the one person then you turn to the rest of the group and interview them about what was moving to them. And then you can interview somebody else either later in that time or the next time, or you could bring in people who were in a different place who wants to be a part. So there's a lot of different ways.

Kendra: There's some stuff written about shared counseling groups. I think it's in Sydney where they started at a woman's center with very small groups where in every group the therapist is interviewing one person and the rest of the group is acting as witnesses to that conversation. So you interview that person and then they have outsider witness responses to that interview and then the person reflects on what they heard, just like we did today, so each group is a different interview.

Chris: Since the state is cutting back on their subsidies to all their service providers we were instructed by the Therapeutic Team to explore ways of working that would be more cost effective. So, I said I will explore working therapeutically in groups. We've got a therapeutic fund, so, we can contract outside experts when a social worker thinks she won't be able to work with a certain case, but that fund usually runs out by the middle of the year. So, if we can stretch our funds by working with 6,7,8 children per session, that would be a success story.

But that's not the primary reason why I want to work with groups, I want to utilise the knowledges the survivors have. I know I have certain skills and knowledges about this but every time I have conversations with children or survivors about this, every time I become so aware that I have no idea of that person's life and their experiences and what they've done to survive, what they've done to get to the ways of living and being that they prefer. I never get to a point like 'Okay, I know this stuff'.

Every time they surprise me with the ways they are going. So, that's why I want to use the group, because there are knowledges there and there's expertise that are enriching these conversations and the girls' lives. That's why I said that I was so amazed by Yolandi - the mentally limited girl in the group – and the strides that she's making by just trying to keep pace with the other girls. Though she hasn't told her story yet but she's right up there empowered with the other girls. It's as if she got to tell her story because they told theirs.

Kendra: I was once working within a shared counseling group, and the things I really liked and the woman really liked, were that it was nice for me to be so decentred because the concept of shared counseling is that they are all contributing to the therapy process, they are all sharing in that and you as a therapist is only one more person, you're not *the* person.

Chris: For instance, like setting up rules and arrangements for the group, they take me on concerning the rules and things, and that's a good thing for me. So, I let them very much know this is your group, it's not my group. I can ask the questions but it's actually not about me asking some kind of expert question, it's about them storying and sharing their knowledges with each other, and I think that's definitely enhancing that feeling or that awareness.

Stephanie: I think as far as institutionally... you know, when you raise ideas that people are going to hold the knowledge, I think sometimes it's kind of like, how to present it to your managers. I know that sometimes when I wanted to do something more like re-elicit young people's ideas about how to structure a group, they answer 'Well, they don't know how to run a therapeutic group'. I think to be aware of that so that you don't get discouraged or it doesn't become a barrier for you because I think it can happen like, 'How can you let these children do that, and that they are not going to be therapeutic'.

#### **6.13. REFLEKSIES OP TRANSFORMERENDE AKSIES.**

Chris: I actually thought that they should present something to the administrator, for, the little bit that I read about participatory action research is, 'Why are you doing research?', so that there's some transformative action, and it's not me who planned it, it's they who want to change something in their situation. Like, one of the things said in one of the early groups was that the punishment for perpetrators was to light. So, I immediately visualized myself and the group of girls going to the courthouses with posters, saying 'Send this guy away for much longer!'. You know, someone once wrote of being an 'activityist'. I like that idea.

The other thing that I was wondering about was that each girl, each child has got a big, thick green file with all the court cases, articles and documents – it's just an enormous file, but they've got no insight in that. You should have seen the expression on their faces when I asked them about these files. So, I would ask them what kind of stories are being filed, and they would say that it's all the problem stuff. So, we are very consciously starting up new files with alternative stories, and documenting those stories. So, you should see how proud they are of their journals and the files that we are pitching up over and against the green files.

It's furthermore their perception that the therapeutic team is not interested in these stories, they are only interested in documenting the problem stories and they do that very expertly. So, for us to document, in the group, these alternative stories are so empowering for them because no one has spend any attention on those stories before. So, I thought one of the actions I could suggest in the group is that they could go to the administrator and demand that they want other files as well and that these stories should be documented and noted and read by who ever are interested or who are suppose to be experts in their lives and the decisions being made concerning their lives. So, documenting and spreading the news is something I would like to suggest to the group.

The other thing we thought about is doing these kind of groups, because this is the first time someone does it like this and I think they started getting into the value of it for each other because they've got discussions and conversations going about what they mean for each other outside of the sessions. Remember, these girls weren't friends when we started out with the group, so, often in informal ways I would just ask questions about what happens to the group outside the group, and then they would story supporting each other at school and at home or just walking across the street to another house and seek for the support of that person. So, that is 'Wow' things that happen. So, even if I'm not there I'm sure they'll take being a group and supporting each other further.

#### **6.14. REFLEKSIES OP NARRATIEWE WERKSWYSES.**

Jill: What does the social worker think about this, because she thought it was strange all these questions. I'm just curious about how this has affected her?

Chris: We were talking about narrative ways of working a lot after her experience of me asking Madilise these kind of questions and I was amazed that one or two sessions later she kind of clicked into a narrative way of working. She stopped making conclusions. She at one time stopped me and asked if it would be alright if she asks this question and she would go for it.

So, that was great!, she showed some interest and I could share some thoughts on working in narrative ways. She clicked into it but unfortunately she didn't complete the journey with us.

Jill: But she could be somebody when you talk about it, presenting it to the administrator, that she could support it.

Chris: That's strange, I'm sitting here wondering how do they view me because my expertise is to be a spiritual guy not a therapist, so I think some of them think of me as just a spiritual guy trying something, like some of the social workers being on the team with me.

Francine: Wait till they see the results.

Chris: I'm waiting for the children to convince them.

#### **6.15. REFLEKSIES OP PERSEPSIES EN VERTROUE.**

Stephanie: Well, I have to tell you, you are changing my perception of a minister.

Francine: I'm sure you are changing their perception of men as well.

Chris: I hope so, although I don't do that consciously but I hope that they might find that they can relax and trust again. It was interesting for when we were reflecting on my presentation, I had a specific chat with Chereese about trusting. So, I definitely asked her how did it come that when I invited you to the group and you knew it was about sexual abuse... , how was it that you were okay to come, and then she said, 'Because I trust you'. So we had a discussion on trusting in that relationship.

Francine: What was the trust? What did she base her trust on?

Chris: She was spying on me. She actually wanted to come on her own to chat with me because she said that some of her friends told her that dominee Chris is giving good advise. I was laughing at that one. So, and then she said that she thought that she might be able to trust me.

Francine: So word is going round?

Chris: I try to live up to it, working in the system I'm quite aware of what children share with me and what I share in the therapeutic team because it just leaks out, and it leaks out from the workers to the caretakers to the children, it's like that and they'll know if you're trustworthy or not. So, I'm quite aware of what I share with them.

## 6.16. REFLEKSIES OP VERSKILLENDE GESIGSPUNTE.

Jill: So the second thing that you have done was further ideas about narrative work and trauma and I have some questions. We presented these questions at a conference in Liverpool and I got this e-mail from somebody who I've never met, who lives and works in London, and he works with - we wouldn't use this wording here - but he said mentally retarded children, and he was using these questions and he said that it made their words flow and it was about abuse. So would you be interested?

These questions are actually going back to experiences of abuse and having people tell those stories from different perspectives and I found that that makes a big difference for some people who have the difficulty that they get plunged back into some of these almost kinaesthetic experiences. So, I'm not suggesting to use it with everybody but I'm just thinking that if you do a lot of work with sexual abuse it might be useful. It proposes two different things, one thing it proposes is different points of view. So, one woman I worked with who had been a survivor of sexual abuse, I just used that idea of these three different points of view. One is of you as an adult, the other is me as a therapist like 'What would they think that I the therapist saw?', and the third is an adult who, had they witnessed it, would have done something or would have seen it very differently. So, with one person I simply, I have her write a narrative from those three different points of

view. I just asked her because she was somebody who is interested in writing, so I asked her if she'd be interested in writing this story three different times from three different points of view - it was really meaningful for her because she saw very different things.

#### **6.17. REFLEKSIES OP *OM OP TE STAAN EN VENNOOTSKAPPE*.**

Shelley: One thing that stood out to me was the smiles that were taken away because one of the things I noticed in the photographs and the presentation was the smiles, Chereese's smile and the smiles of the group letting go of the balloons. I would have questions I think about getting the smiles back and what that's been like and what it means?

Jill: So, Shelley how do you connect with these smiles, and why is that part meaningful for you, do you think?

Shelley: I'm not sure why it's meaningful, it's just something that struck me from the photographs, the bright beautiful smiles and that it's meaningful because it must mean that there's more, there's a new story, there's been change, there's been movement away from the bad stories, the fear.

Francine: That touched me very much as well to see them being together, joining in their experience and it seemed as though they were able to get strength from one another through this joining and to share the joy of being together and of standing up to these memories and these experiences, and that's why I was very moved by the balloons and the preparation of the celebration. So, I got a sense of this hope for the future and that there's more.

Jill: So Francine, what specifically did you notice that gave you the idea that the joining together contributed?

Francine: The way they were standing together, touching each other and grouped in a small space, and the picture of the bags, when they had the drawings of the bags that they drew to put in the awfulness of these experiences and how proud they seem to be. It felt like a declaration of their standing up to this and not letting it invade, continue to control their lives, standing up to the silence and not letting themselves be controlled by that.

Jill: How did finding out how they did these things that moved them beyond this and didn't let them be controlled by this, how does that contribute to your life or work?

Francine: It's funny in just hearing how Chris is doing this work and the passion and the love and the sense of significance it has in his life, the meaning for him, it has given me the desire to explore this type of work myself, it seems to be so meaningful to him

and I see the expressions on the girls' faces - that seems to corroborate or to reflect how meaningful it's been to have this work, that working together in this way. So it's given me, it developed a real interest in me to explore this work.

Jill: Do you think you might do that?

Francine: Yes, I think I might, I'd like to because I'm thinking about an internship that's coming up in September and I was actually thinking where I could go to explore, whether this would be possible, it seems very meaningful work and certainly a huge need for it in all societies.

Stephanie: I was obviously struck by a lot of things, but one thing I was left wondering with, was Chereese and Angelique's relationship. Chereese talks a lot about her little sister. I don't know the word you used Chris, it's a word about 'arrogance'. I don't know the word you described Angelique with, and how that came out, but at her young age, together making plans of hiding and escaping the abuse. Well, together they sort of found ways to survive or get through it together and we heard a lot from Chereese about describing her little sister but I would be interested in hearing how Angelique would describe her big sister and what she would say about her sister and how and what she would remember about her sister. I was thinking about why I remembered that - I had a dream about my big sister last night... So that was kind of something I was curious about and would love to hear more about.

Jill: That's interesting, that same description drew my attention when Chris was talking about these girls in this group. I wrote down something about 'the plans to escape injury and abuse' and I think it was interesting when I was hearing about these plans that these two sisters made, Chereese and Angelique. I went back to an experience that I had in my childhood where... I lived in the city, I don't know why, but I had this recurring nightmare that this bear got into our house, and the way that our house was laid out like I would be, if the bear came in the front door or the backdoor, I would be the first person the bear would encounter.

So, I had this recurring nightmare about this bear coming in and getting me, and I finally devised this plan that when the bear came in for some reason I had the bear sort of on his hind legs really up, and I was going to scoot lower than the bear and scoot into my parent's room and get them and we all were going to climb out the window, drive away and never come back. And once I imagined that, I stopped having the nightmare. So, I thought of that when I was hearing of the plans to escape, but one of the things that really struck me was how different it would be to in having a partner in making that plan and how it would... because this was a very singular plan that I had and I was just wondering how it might be really different to have a partner and what the two of them as sisters have really contributed to each other in this kind of planning. I would like to hear about that partnership.

## 6.18. REFLEKSIES OP BESEMSTOKKE EN BALLONNE.

Kendra: One thing that stood out for me and I have such a vivid image of it, was the story of the broomstick and when Chris asked Madilise if she wanted to put it on the wall or something and she said, 'No, I want to leave it right there behind the door. He knows it's there'. It had me thinking about lots of things, one was just what all went into her picking that broomstick up and taking that action and hitting him, and what it meant that she wanted to leave it behind the door, and it seems such a symbol... that broomstick. It had me thinking about my work with someone who had experienced sexual abuse as a child and just maybe stories they might have that we haven't explored that would include symbols like that, that could be very powerful things they could carry with them, symbols of resistance, symbols of taking action against the abuse. I think I'll keep that image in my mind in future conversations. And it will remind me to have those kind of conversations, to explore those stories with woman.

Stephanie: Could I add something else. I'm still with the same idea of the two sisters - after you told your story and I was listening to your story about... I just all of a sudden remembered you were talking about Cheese's mother and grandfather and the story of the 'Kieries Klub' and how they got the gold membership, so, I'm curious to know if Angelique is going to get membership to that club, and which certificate will it be.

And also another question, I would be wondering what the grandfather or the mother would say about hearing the story of the two little girls. Did they know that Angelique and Chereese were partnering in this way to escape the abuse or will they be surprised? I'm just curious to know how they saw their relationship and them as sisters and what they would say about that, because it sounds like the grandfather was calling often and checking in to make sure that things were okay. Did he have a sense that the two of them were doing the same for each other? - it just kind of got me to think about that.

Mary: I was moved by the balloons being released and how I had this image of them floating and dropping, and somebody picking them up and looking at them. It's almost like an invitation to belong to this group of supporters against abuse - anti-abuse. And I also wondered what these girls experienced when they released the balloons, if they had a sense of freedom, this is the feeling that I have, but I just wondered what their experiences were with that release - was it freedom, a relieve or what it was?

Jill: So, Mary I'm interested in going back a little to the first part about what you said about an invitation for others to join, and I guess I was just wondering if you thought that others would be interested in joining, or what you were thinking about that invitation and other people?

Mary: Well, I know personally I'm very interested in joining and in a way I feel like that balloon touched down on me I was able to pick up the balloon. Yes, I would like to be an anti-abuse supporter as well.

Jill: What does that mean to you to feel like that balloon came down and you're joining?

Mary: Oh, its a really special feeling for me to feel joined with that group. I admire these young girls so much and their courage to talk about the abuse, and invite other people to talk about their stories.

#### **6.19. REFLEKSIES OP "RE-MEMBERING" EN VERHOUDINGE.**

Jill: Another moment for me that stood out was hearing about Chereese talking with her granddad everyday. My farther died about three and a half years ago and it's funny... there's certain people at least in my experience, in my life that just seems so constant that it's hard to imagine life without them. And I saw things in a similar way by talking to him, I talk to him all the time, and so, I like the idea of having sort of this parallel kind of experience. I talk to him about dilemmas, and it made me curious about what kinds of things Chereese talks to her granddad about and also if Angelique is in on that as well, and if she knows about that, or she doesn't?

Flora: I share some of the feelings of Mary. I'm quite amazed by the girls' courage, the strength to really want to share this story with us, I treasure that. And it also reminds me of some of the church members, some of them also have similar experiences. They are already adults but they are still stuck with those feelings, those hurts. I think when they are young they can deal with this much better. I really treasure Chris' work with teenagers and even younger, to take care of their needs.

Besides that I also noticed that significant persons in their lives are so important because both girls celebrate the moments they treasure the grandpa and the mother, I don't know, in Chinese culture we seldom express that even a person who has already departed, is already gone, is important. We seldom have that occasions, traditions or rituals to bring the persons that is important into one's live.

Jill: So, Flora, do you have, from either of these ideas that you're having, any thoughts about how you might use some of these ideas ?

Flora: Yes, actually I'm thinking of bringing some of the girls of my church to share, of course if they know one another it's much better, if not, I'll think of some ways.

Marilee: I think I'll do this in English because then I won't be excluding the group.

Chris: Just one sentence in Afrikaans.

Marilee: Dominee Chris, of Chris...?

Chris: Please, Chris.

Marilee: Chris, hoe ken hulle jou, hoe praat hulle van jou, as Chris of dominee Chris?

Chris: Dominee Chris.

Marilee: Nou goed, ek sal dan 'dominee Chris' gebruik. Dominee Chris het ons baie mooi verduidelik hoe hy in 'n verhouding met julle is en dit het my opgeval dat ds. Chris, hy verteenwoordig 'n man, en ek is baie geïnteresseerd om uit te vind wat sien julle in ds. Chris. Dit het vir my gelyk asof hy julle laat veilig voel en ek het gewonder hoe... wat aan ds. Chris maak dat julle met hom kan gesels?

And now in English, listening to Chris, I felt his presence, his moving emotionally and therapeutically, he was engaging, he was there, he was present. I noted that and for me, if I had to imagine that will be very valuable. And I was thinking what that represented as feeling safe. I could imagine going through these things, it might be isolating because you were silenced. And now you have someone that is present and now you can tell your stories. I'm very curious in hearing what your relationship is with ds. Chris and what you see for the future.

Jill: It seems that that relationship... does that give you any thoughts or does it take you anywhere thinking about that relationship that you witnessed?

Marilee: Well, yes, partly because a 'dominee' has a role for me. When Chris said before that they think of him as a dominee I couldn't understand, but now I understand. For me a 'dominee' is someone without an identity, it doesn't necessarily have to be a male, he is someone who will protect, he could be trusted. So, I have a very positive memory of what a 'dominee' is, what a minister is. And then I kind of realise perhaps this is what these girls expected from Chris, this safe haven where they could tell things and perhaps have a relationship where it would not be possible with someone who is not a 'dominee'.

Francine: I was wondering if it was the fact that he was a 'dominee' or whether they had checked on him, and I think Chris was telling me that they have not trusted just the title but they have checked on the behaviour and made sure that the title and the behaviour went together, were coherent.

Jill: That reminds me of how much these girls have taken things into their own hands which was quite inspiring to me. Hearing Madilise say as she walked by the perpetrator, 'You stink', she's the one making the evaluation, she can stick with her opinions, and to me it had something to do with being in charge of your own life, and I find that very inspiring.

Kendra: That reminds me, I was thinking when I heard that and the story about the broomstick, I was thinking about conversations or opportunities for these woman that I worked with, that are older than these girls. To hear these stories I think they will find it inspiring as well, and it would mean something to them too. Because they worry a lot about other children experiencing abuse, and to hear how these girls have taken things into their own hands... that would mean a lot to them.

## **6.20. REFLEKSIES OP VERBINTENISSE EN NETWERKE.**

Marilee: One thing that struck me was when Chris said that these kids often had no one, they don't have a network and I kind of feel that we have heard their stories, we are their network now, we are the ones sharing in the moments.

Chris: I think they constantly have the notion of no one out there really cares and by me telling them or asking them permission that I can bring their stories and then tell them in what setting will I share it, was just this 'Will they really be interested in our stories?', and this just affirms it.

Jill: And I think their witnessing that will be stronger than us saying it, it's my sense.

Stephanie: But it's almost like we allow them to choose whether they want us as their network or not.

Shelley: I was also thinking of how we might be able to help facilitate sharing the stories more like with your group, that for them to know that now this group of us is going to be so much broader.

Stephanie: We are our own balloons.

Chris: You know, part of... I don't know the perpetrators so well and their strategies and ways of thinking, but part of their strategy is getting the victims or the survivors to think that their ways of thinking are corrupt or stupid, and so, this is just such a totally different story, but your ways of thinking are awesome.

Jill: So, Chris, thank you very much for bringing this. I really wouldn't have thought about bringing pictures. But to be able to see their actual faces I thought was wonderful, to me that brought it to life. I loved seeing that along with the stories.

Shelley: I would love to hear how they respond to it.

Chris: I'll make a tape and circulate it again. Why this was so enriching for me is, I mean you're perspectives and the questions you brought with you, because they will definitely pick up on the questions and then that will prompt conversations about it, things I haven't thought about. That will be nice. So, this is why these things are so good because in a way you work in a flow of things and you don't often think outside those ways if you are not exposed... So thank you very much.

## 6.21. REFLEKSIES OP EVANSTON.

My besoek aan Jill en Gene in Evanston sal sekerlik tel as een van die grootste ervarings in my lewe. Weereens was dit nie soveel die plek wat hierdie belewenis opgemaak het nie – dit óók – maar die mense. Na hierdie ontmoeting en gesprekke het ek nog meer bewondering vir Jill Freedman. Haar rustige maar diepgrondige aanslag, haar erns en haar humor, haar oortuigings en passie, asook haar vermoë om uiters sinvolle en doelmatige vrae te stel, sal ek haar altyd voor bewonder en sal dit altyd vir my 'n leerervaring wees. Die voorreg om 'n hele groep baie uiteenlopende, tog baie bekwame mense byeen te hê in die refleksie-gesprek was vir my 'n uiters sinvolle ervaring. Die effek daarvan en dit wat ek voorsien om daaruit voort te vloei, maak my opgewonde, en verskaf dit hope energie en motivering aan my om die vrae en temas wat in die refleksie-gesprek na vore gekom het, te eksploreer.

Die refleksiegroep het soveel vrae en temas *ontdek* en uitgelig, temas en vrae wat ek nie kan wag om op die Talitha Kumi-groep se agenda – met hulle toestemming - te plaas nie. Die dogters is netso opgewonde soos ek om na die video-opname te kyk. Ek sal graag die volgende temas en vrae saam met hulle wil eksploreer:

- Hoe ervaar hulle my emosionele betrokkenheid?
- Wat dink hulle daarvan dat ek as man met hulle hierdie dikwels blootstellende gesprekke voer, en in hierdie terapeutiese verhoudings met hulle staan?
- Waarop bou hulle hul vertroue in my – en mekaar?
- Hoe sien hulle my? Wat verstaan hulle onder die woord 'dominee'?
- Dink hulle ons slaag daarin dat ons almal – ingesluit 'dominee' Chris - gelyke deelnemers aan die gesprekke, aksies en prosesse is?

- In hoe ‘n mate dink hulle hulle beskik oor “insider knowledge” en “expertise”? En, hoe sou hulle die gesprekke en prosesse in die lig hiervan benader sodat dit tot voordeel van almal strek?
- In hoe ‘n mate is die besemstok vir Madilise ‘n simbool wat sy in haar lewe saam met haar wil neem?
- Hoeveel – indien enige – idees en gesprekke het Chereese en Angelica\* al gedeel oor hul “partnership” in die maak van planne om veilig te wees en die misbruik vry te spring?
- Watter rol het Oupie in Angelica se lewe gespeel, en sou sy ook sy ‘stem’ deel van haar lewe wou maak?
- Wat het hulle gedoen om hul *glimlagte* terug te kry?
- Wat dink hulle daarvan dat die ballonne, wat hulle gelanseer het en in mense se hande beland het, ‘n uitnodiging aan daardie mense was om deel te wees van die groep, om saam met die groep te staan teen misbruik, geweld en geheimhouding?
- En, sou hulle verdere kontak met die refleksiegroep, asook die *Silent Too Long*-groep, wou hê?

## 6.22. REFLEKSIES OP MY REIS.

Hoe verwoord ‘n mens die intense emosies en belewenisse van ‘n so lang *reis*? My studie – my navorsing, literatuurstudie en praktykwerk - het my heelwat langer geneem as talle ander studente. Dit het meer dikwels as selde vir my gevoel asof ek ‘n lang-afstand atleet is, wat vir ‘n wedloop ingeskryf is waarvan hy nie weet watter afstand of vlak van fiksheid van hom verwag word nie. Tog was my wedloop, my *reis* een groot avontuur. Soms ‘n *reis* wat moedeloos gemaak het, soms soveel verligting en welbehae. Dikwels ‘n baie swaar *reis*... om met soveel *survivors* – en hul verhale – op *reis* te gaan, het gewis van my gevra om geestelik, fisies en emosioneel so fiks as moontlik te wees. Ek was nie altyd nie.

My gemoed was dikwels swaar, oor-vol. Ek het dikwels gehuil, dikwels lang ente gaan stap tussen Pongola se suikerrietlande, dikwels lang ente gaan draf... om kop skoon te maak, om te huil, om te skree, “Here, ek verstaan U nie. Hierdie stukkend, nog minder”, om net weer van Hom te vra om dit oor my siel te laat reën.

Deur al hierdie prosesse, die verhale en emosies, die gesprekke, die lees en die weer lees, die gesels en die bid, het die grootste bewondering meetbaar vir die talle *survivors* saam met wie ek korter of langer ente kon *reis*, ontwikkel. Hoe sou ek ooit die onderwyseres van Nongoma, wat haar storie vir my op Cat Stevens se “songs” gesing het, kan vergeet, of die meisie, wat na haar “overdose” die kragtigste *Ingelse* gedigte geskryf het en ‘n treffende collage gemaak het van die lig wat weer in haar lewe ingebreek het. Of die verstandelik-beperkte seun, wat op grusame wyse deur ander seuns in die kelder van die skoolkoshuis vir dae aangehou en verkrag is... hoe sou ek sy eenvoudige, kleurvolle briewe kan vergeet, en die dag toe hy die toue, wat hom aan die oortreders gebind het, losgewikkel het.

Of hoe sou ek die gemeentelid kon vergeet wat al jare lank worstel met die effek van haar oom se *vet vark-vingers* in haar lewe en huwelik, of die een wie se stiefpa haar twintig sent gegee het vir elke *gunsie* wat hy by haar kon *koop*, of die meisie wie se oupa steeds in dieselfde straat bly, haar steeds dreig... alles sodat sy die geheim sal hou. En dan was daar nog die diaken wat nie net sy skoonsuster se seun nie, maar ook sy eie dogter misbruik het, en toe alles op die lappe kom, dreig om selfmoord te pleeg as ons iets drasties sou doen. En hoe sou ek die dogter van die regiment sersant majoor se verhaal *nie* kon onthou nie... die vrees, die drank, die vloek en uitlag, die vernedering en die bloed teen die gangmuur, en toe... die verkragting, en daar’s niemand vir wie sy kon vertel nie, en toe... die swangerskap. Dit voel weer vir my asof my hart soos biltong, reep-vir-reep afgetrek word. Maar ek sal ook nooit die dag vergeet dat ek saam met haar buite in die sonlig – *die waarheid* – kon staan, en die wind – *God se “touch”* – ook teen my wang kon voel. Dit was al die saam kwaad-wees, al die saam bang-wees en al die saam huil werd.

Dit was egter eers 'n paar jaar later dat ek sou *ontdek* dat hierdie verhale, en die talle ander wat ek nie hier genoem het nie, alles die *voor-reis* was waarop God my geneem het sodat ek eendag in Talitha Kumi-straat sou kon afry, by Jakaranda Kinderhuis se pers hekke in. Hier het die stukkend my soms grond toe geloop soos 'n Blou Bul-stut dit alleen sou kon. Aanmelding op aanmelding, verslag op verslag, lêer op lêer... molestering, verkragting, seksuele misbruik. Kinders. Almal kinders. Ek kyk terug oor die afgelope vier jaar, ek dink aan Madilise se verhaal, en Chereese s'n, en die dogters van die Talitha Kumi-groep en ek staan met 'n stukkende, tog sterk hart. Stukkend... want hierdie kinders se stories kom sit vas aan my hart. Sterk... ek het soveel saam met hulle *deur-leef*, soveel saam met hulle leer leef!

*Survivors*, dit voel amper simpel om te sê dat ek julle salueer. Ek wil skierts-regop staan, op aandag, doodstil, en vir julle die skerpste saluut gee wat enige offisier nog ooit gekry het. Miskien slaag dit tog daarin om iets te sê van my bewondering vir julle moed, julle deursettingsvermoë en julle *knowledge* om te deur-leef, te oor-leef en te leef! Julle het my lewe verryk. Nee, julle het my lewenstorie vir my geskryf. Ek sou nie 'n ander *reis* wou aanpak nie. Dankie, vir die "amazing" voorreg om langs julle te kon sit en luister...

Nou kyk ek vorentoe saam met julle, en ek sien, en ek droom hoe julle lewens en die gemeenskap rondom ons verander, deur julle moed en *knowledge* getransformeer word. Ek is so opgewonde oor die aksies wat julle wil loods, die "*steps*" wat julle nog wil neem, die "*stands*" wat julle nog wil maak, die "*journey*" wat julle wil aanpak saam met en langs ander dogters. Ek droom dat ons een van die dae sal opkyk en sien dat die platform by die stasie vol staan... vol staan met nog baie dogters wat hul *reis* wil begin. Dankie dat julle "*memories*" oral op die *reis* hulle sal inspireer.